

In the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph on page 10, lines 1-19, with the following paragraph:

Blade shuttle 56 has a slanted surface 60 with a slot 62 into which a blade 64 is received such that its sharp edge 64a extends out slot 62 (FIG. 14). The blade 64 is held in the blade shuttle 56 by two pins 66 through holes 67 in the blade shuttle and through holes 68 in blade 64 (FIG. 13). When assembled, the integrated blade shuttle 56 and blade 64 is extendable and retractable through distal opening 13b (i.e., end of tube 52) of the instrument 10 in response to pivoting of actuator member 18 which translate forward or backward motion to the drive rods 14 and 15 and to the blade shuttle 56 and blade 64 guided longitudinally along the outer tubular surface of guide tube 58 riding in channel 56d. FIGS. 1 and 1A show the integrated blade shuttle and blade retracted in distal end 13a, and FIGS. 2 and 2A show the integrated blade shuttle and blade extended. As shown in these figures, a guide wire 70 is passed into open end 69 of guide tube 58, via an opening extending through the guide tube to the other end of the guide tube, along a path through the instrument provided by channel 50c of guide member 50, opening 48a of gasket 48, into and through routing tube 42, and through an opening 44a extending through valve assembly 44, and exiting the instrument. Valve assembly 44 has a valve control 44b which can be turned to open and closed opening 44a, and may be the same or similar to the valve assembly described in U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/776,431, filed February 2, 2001, now U.S. Patent No. 6,997,931, or International Patent Application PCT/US02/02791, published under International Publication No. WO 02/062200 A2. The valve assembly 44 extends through an opening 12f in handle 12. Optionally, the valve assembly 44 may be removed from instrument 10, and routing tube 42 extended to opening 12f, which is sized to engage the end of tube 42.